

REMARKS

Applicant has considered the outstanding official action. It is respectfully submitted that the claims are directed to patentable subject matter and are in condition for formal allowance.

Claim 17 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Claim 17 has been canceled. Accordingly, the § 112, second paragraph rejection of claim 17 is rendered moot. Withdrawal of the § 112, second paragraph rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 28-29, 33-35, and 38-41 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant has amended independent claim 25 to include the limitations of claim 28 and intervening claim 26 and has canceled claims 26 and 28.

Applicant has amended independent claim 30 to include the limitation of claim 33 and has canceled claim 33. Applicant has amended the dependency of claim 34 to depend from claim 30.

Applicant has amended independent claim 36 to

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include the limitation of claim 38 and has canceled claim 38. Applicant has amended the dependency of claim 39. Accordingly, claims 25, 29, 30-32, 34-35, 36, 39-41 are in condition for allowance. Withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested and formal allowance is requested.

Claims 1-12, 19-24 and 42-51 are allowed. Formal allowance of claims 1-12, 19-24 and 42-51 is requested.

Claims 13-18, 25-27, 30-32, 36 and 37 are rejected. Claims 13-18, 26, 28, 33 and 38 are canceled without prejudice. Applicant reserves the right to separately pursue the subject matter of claims 13-18, 26, 28, 33 and 38 and the invention in a continuation application.

The pending art rejections are as follows:

- (1) Claims 13-15 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,181,812 (Labinka);
- (2) Claims 36 and 37 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,591,300 (Weiblen);
- (3) Claims 30-32 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No.

5,630,683 (Smith);

(4) Claims 30-32 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as  
being anticipated by U.S. Patent No.

3,361,014 (McClennan);

(5) Claims 25 and 26 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as  
being anticipated by U.S. Patent No.

3,317,216 (Muthler);

(6) Claims 25-27 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as  
being anticipated by U.S. Patent No.

2,261,828 (French); and

(7) Claims 16-18 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as  
being unpatentable over Labinka.


Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections based on § 102 and § 103. However, based on applicant's cancellation of claims 13-18 and amendment to claims 25, 30 and 36 to place these claims in condition for allowance, the § 102 and § 103 rejections detailed above are rendered moot. Applicant reserves the right to separately pursue the subject matter of claims 13-18 and the invention in a continuation application. As such, withdrawal of the § 102 and § 103 rejections is respectfully requested.

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Reconsideration and allowance of the claims are  
respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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